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Date 18 May 1990

Colby says Cold War over, KGB focusing on industry

By Francis Curta
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MOSCOW — "The Cold War is over," former CIA chief William E. Colby said yesterday as he sat in a hotel facing the Kremlin.

"Of course the KGB is going to continue its work," focusing more attention on industrial espionage and the evasion of Western restrictions to the export of high technology, but in the field of subversion "there has been a drop in active Soviet involvement around the world," he told a seminar.

He cited the Soviet Union's greater reluctance to support national liberation movements, adding that recently "they sat still for the Nicaraguan affair."

But even with the end of the Cold War between the superpowers, intelligence and intelligence services

will still be needed, notably for the purpose of providing analysis, for the verification of agreements and to deal with threats such as terrorism, he said.

"But the more comes over the table, the less will be needed from under the table," he added.

Mr. Colby, on his first visit to the Soviet Union, said: "The most surprising thing about my trip is that I should be here in the first place."

The former CIA chief, who headed the organization from 1973 to 1976 and who oversaw the agency's operations in Vietnam in the 1960's, spent two days in Leningrad before traveling to Moscow as part of his week-long trip to the Soviet Union.

In Moscow to attend a seminar organized by the U.S. Center for War, Peace and the News Media, he was staying at an ordinary Soviet hotel

rather than embassy premises, adding of the KGB: "I don't think they're following me."

He said he was glad to be able to see the Soviet Union at first hand, and had long advocated sending young CIA analysts over here as "tourists" to get a feel for the country.

He was still unsure whether he might be meeting any KGB officials, but stressed that in a changing "new world" there is a possibility for some cooperation between the CIA and the KGB "on a very limited basis."

On President Mikhail Gorbachev, Mr. Colby said the United States had long "misperceived" him.

"We thought of him as an ideologue, and he turns out to be a very adroit politician," he said.

Mr. Gorbachev had managed to consolidate his position politically, but "he hasn't dared bite the bullet in economic terms," he added.

The Soviet president has been held back in his economic reforms by fear of a popular backlash to higher inflation and unemployment and so, in economic terms, he "has failed, but for sensible reasons."